



# Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs' Association

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July 2, 2009

TO: Committee on State Affairs and Homeland Security  
RE: Support for AB 319

On behalf of the Fire Chiefs of Wisconsin I would like to offer our unified and unanimous support of AB 319. This bill sets the building blocks for establishment of response assets for structural collapse rescue in our state. This legislation is long overdue and is the culmination of hundreds of hours of work by member departments through the Wisconsin State Fire Chief's Collapse Rescue Working Group. AB 319 is consistent with the working group implementation plan. The working group plan was a collaborative effort to bring the best possible outcome with the greatest amount of efficiency while right sizing team membership and assets.

It is absolutely imperative that the legislature pass this bill without revision. The Wisconsin State Fire Chief's Association fully supports AB 319, we ask for your unanimous support also. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Bradley Liggett  
President



**State of Wisconsin /** DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

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WING-EXA

July 2, 2009

Representative Frederick Kessler  
Chair, Assembly Committee on State Affairs and Homeland Security  
Room 302 North, P.O. Box 8952, State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53708.

Dear Representative Kessler:

First, let me thank all of the members and staff of the Wisconsin Joint Legislative Council and especially the public and legislative members of the Special Committee on Emergency Management and Continuity of Government. All have provided an invaluable service in the review of the role of Wisconsin Emergency Management and in the re-codification process of the current Chapter 166. As always, a special thanks to Senior Staff Attorneys Pam Shannon and Dick Sweet.

Chair Kessler and members of the Committee on State Affairs and Homeland Security we are here today in support of Assembly Bill 316 and AB 319. With me today is Dianne Kleiboer, Wisconsin Emergency Management. We are happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Larry L. Olson  
Executive Assistant

**REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB JAUCH, CHAIR,  
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
AND CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT**

**TO THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON  
STATE AFFAIRS AND HOMELAND SECURITY**

**July 2, 2009**

Good morning Chair Kessler and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to you today. During the last legislative interim period and continuing on into this year, I had the privilege of serving as chair of Legislative Council's Special Committee on Emergency Management and Continuity of Government. In addition to the four legislators who served on the committee, the committee included representatives of state, local, and private sector emergency response entities, fire departments, law enforcement, hospitals, and emergency medicine. Representative Ballweg served as Vice-Chair of the committee and she will also present testimony on the proposals from the Legislative Study Committee to you today.

You have before you today three bills and one joint resolution developed through the committee process: AB 316, AB 317, AB 319 and AJR 59. Each of these legislative proposals was approved unanimously by the members of the Legislative Study Committee. Many of the proposals recommended by the committee are proposals that we hope we never have to put to use, including those that deal with legislative continuity in times of disaster. However, one thing that we learned from the recent H1N1 flu outbreak is that advance preparation can mitigate the effects of a disaster and that it is therefore imperative that we be prepared to address worst case scenarios. Both Pam Shannon and Dick Sweet from Legislative Council are here today to assist in answering your questions about the proposals as necessary.

The drafts before you today do the following:

- **AB 316** is the recodification of chapter 166 of the Wisconsin Statutes, which relates to emergency management. The bill moves the provisions into a new chapter of the statutes, reorganizes the chapter, and modernizes the language. Most of the modifications are technical in nature and represent important improvements to the state's system of emergency response. As I mentioned, these provisions were supported by all members of the committee, and received support from the Legislative Council Committee. Department officials are either submitting written testimony or they are here in person to answer any questions the committee may have regarding the recodification. The bill also updates the current statutes on liability for health care providers who volunteer during emergencies, by including health care providers who are not currently covered and by including certain volunteers who are credentialed in other states.
- **AB 317** provides for legislative continuity during times of disaster by requiring legislators to designate emergency interim successors, allowing a house of the Legislature and its committees to conduct a virtual meeting if certain conditions are met during a time of disaster, and allowing the Legislature to provide a process for designating an emergency temporary seat of government. In addition, **AJR 59** recommended by the committee amends the Wisconsin Constitution, which currently requires the Legislature to provide for succession and continuity in periods of emergency resulting from enemy attacks; the draft requires the Legislature to allow for succession and continuity in other emergency situations. Currently, the legislature cannot meet and conduct business anywhere other than the Capitol. Having a plan that provides continuity during times of disaster is a necessity. State agencies and the Governor have plans to meet and operate outside of the Capitol. It is important to recognize that there are certain situations that could result in a non-functioning legislature. The committee made a series of

recommendations and we realize some of the provisions, particularly the line of succession, will generate discussion and it is important that the legislature contemplate the options. I hope that the legislature will move at least some of this bill forward. Some aspects of the bill everyone should agree on. At the very least, it is important that we provide the legislature with the ability to meet and conduct business outside of the Capitol.

- AB 319 would create statutes that govern regional teams established to respond to structural collapse emergencies, similar to the regional teams that we currently use to address hazardous materials emergencies. The bill was brought forth by fire chiefs throughout the state. This bill will allow for a trained force that can respond and be reimbursed for these rare emergency incidences. The committee grappled with the funding aspect of this bill and we recognized that this poses a challenge in the current fiscal environment. This proposal will put the structure for the collapse teams in place and leaves the funding question open.

Thank you for considering these important legislative proposals.

Testimony

To the  
Assembly Committee on State Affairs and Homeland Security

2009 Senate Bill 226 and 2009 Assembly Bill 316;  
2009 Senate Bill 227 and 2009 Assembly Bill 317;  
2009 Senate Bill 229 and 2009 Assembly Bill 319 and  
2009 Assembly Joint Resolution 59.

Chairman Kessler and Members of the Assembly Committee on State Affairs and Homeland Security. My name is Kenneth Hartje 1011 W 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Nekoosa WI. 54457 (715-886-4181) retired Fire Chief City of Nekoosa and Past President of the Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today in favor of the Emergency Management and Continuity of Government legislative proposals.

I would like to State my strong support of the recommendations from the Special Committee on Emergency Management and Continuity of Government. As a member of this committee, working with all of the different legislators, emergency responders and hospital personal that made up this Committee I feel that there was a strong group that understands the emergency's and how to deal with any emergency in a responsible manner. There were a good number of people that came and testified also. I feel that the Great State of Wisconsin will be better prepared to handle any emergency with the recommendations from our report to you. There was a great deal of time and discussion on all of the recommendations with the welfare of the people in need, budget, and the safety of the responders taken into consideration.

I feel that there were a good number of services that were not always used in an emergency because the responders did not have any knowledge that this help was there for them. It was also brought out that some of the simple things can be worked out before the emergency happens with a plan ready to go if a big emergency hits. I felt that we were well prepared in the State of Wisconsin and with the recommendations it will be even better for all of us.

In closing I support the legislative proposals from the Legislative Council study committee.

Thank You

Ken Hartje